

Golden Gazette

October 2019

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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults

Hoop Dreams Never Fade

by Mary Jane Dye



Have you been told by friends or family that you're too old to play basketball? If so, take the offense and direct the conversation to the remarkable ladies of the NOVA United Fifty and Over Basketball League. After all, a good offense is the best defense.

Established in 2003, the league now has over 50 members. Teams meet Friday evenings at the James Lee Center in Falls Church. There are five teams in five age groups: Wildfire (50+), Solid Gold (60+), Gold Meddlers (65+), Rebounders (70+) and the Classics (75+). According to Nancy Joyner, league president, players have a lot of fun, but also play to win.

In fact, the league began competing in the National Senior Games in 2005. To be invited to the games, you must first win local tournaments. This past June,



NOVA United's Wildfire, Solid Gold, Gold Meddlers, Rebounders and the Classics went to the senior games in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They played three half-court games in four days. Placing a

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Absentee Voting for the November 5 Election

Tuesday, Nov. 5 is election day, and county, state and federal offices are on the ballot, including the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

If you can't make it to the polls on Nov. 5, you can absentee vote in person or by mail. In-person absentee voting is available at the Fairfax County

Government Center and other locations across the county. There are 20 valid reasons to vote absentee, including illness, disability and personal business or vacation outside the county.

In-person voting will be available until Saturday, Nov. 2 at 5 p.m., and mail-in absentee ballots must be returned to Office of Elections by 7 p.m. on Election Day.

For information about how to apply to vote absentee, absentee vote by mail, or dates, hours and locations for in-person absentee voting, contact the county's Office of Elections, 703-222-0776 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee.

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Don't Miss a Single Issue of the *Golden Gazette*!

The *Golden Gazette* is a **free** monthly newspaper published by the Fairfax County Government. It covers local news to use and human interest stories for older adults.

The newspaper is available in a PDF format via email subscription. You also can read it online through Senior Navigator.

It also is read over the phone to subscribers who register with The Washington Ear. Go to **www.washear.org** or call 301-681-6636 to register for this free service.

To subscribe to the *Golden Gazette* or update an address:

- **Call 703-324-5633.**
- **Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults.** Click on the *Golden Gazette*.



Golden Gazette

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Contribute

While the *Golden Gazette* is free, contributions help defray costs. If you would like to contribute, send a check payable to County of Fairfax and write *Golden Gazette Contribution* in the memo line to: Fairfax County, P.O. Box 3406, Fairfax 22038-3406.

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Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. Call 703-324-5411, TTY 711. The TTY number for all contacts in this publication is 711 unless otherwise stated.

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Hoop Dreams

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respectable fifth in their divisions were Solid Gold and Rebounders. While tournaments can be tough, Nancy says, “the players wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Jackie Stephens is 82 and one of the founders of the league. Although, she hung up her jersey two years ago, she remains active in the league. “It’s one of my families,” she says, and “it’s so much more than winning games.” Jackie notes that for herself and other caregivers, the game also provides stress relief and socialization.

“Best of all,” she says, “I’m with friends doing what I love to do, and that’s play basketball.”

If half court, three-on-three hoops is something you’ve always wanted to try, or if you’re a former player yearning to get back in the game, consider joining the league. It meets at James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Rd., Falls Church at the times listed below.

Nancy and Jackie encourage potential players to just show up. “You’ll be welcomed with open arms,” says Nancy.

For more information, email Nancy at nancy-djoyner101@gmail.com or go to <https://sites.google.com/site/novaunitedbball/Home>. (See practice schedule next column.)

October Meeting of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging will meet **Wednesday, Oct. 16**, 1-3 p.m., Kings Park Library, Conference Room, 9000 Burke Lake Rd., Burke. The public is welcome. A comment period begins each meeting.

Questions?
Call the Department
of Family Services at
703-324-5403



An oversized national senior games poster featured NOVA United.

Friday Practice Schedule

5:30–6:45 p.m.—Rebounders 70+ & Classics 75+

6:45–8:00 p.m.—Triple Threat 55+ & Wildfire 50+

8–9:30 p.m.—Open Gym for All Members

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Yahne Miorini, LL.M.

FTC Says to Spread the Word About Social Security Scams


Getting calls saying your Social Security number is suspended because of suspicious activity? It's a scam. The Social Security Administration (SSA) is not calling you, no matter what your caller ID says.

To spread the word about this growing scam, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau created this fraud prevention placemat in consultation with the FTC and SSA.

Order Free Copies

You can order free copies of the placemat to use at a meal site or to share with friends and family. The placemat is in English on one side and Spanish on the other.

Scams involving your Social Security number and benefits are on the rise!




Here are the facts:


- Government employees will not threaten to take away benefits or ask for money or personal information to protect your Social Security card or benefits.
- Scammers can fake your caller ID. So don't be fooled if the call seems to be from the SSA's real phone number (800) 772-1213 or the SSA Inspector General's Fraud Hotline number.
- If a caller asks for your Social Security number, bank account number or credit card information, hang up.

Report suspected scams to the SSA Inspector General at (800) 269-0271 or oig.ssa.gov/report. Visit IdentityTheft.gov/SSA for more tips.

cfpb Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

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To report these scams, go to ftc.gov/complaint. And for more tips, visit IdentityTheft.gov/SSA.

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Have You Received a Jury Questionnaire in Your Mailbox?

You may be one of approximately 58,000 Fairfax County or City of Fairfax residents receiving a jury questionnaire in the mail. Here is some helpful information to make the process easier.

Just because you received a questionnaire does not mean you will be summoned for jury duty. Potential jurors are randomly selected from voter registration lists to represent a cross section of the community. The questionnaire is the beginning of a screening process to determine who



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Jury Questionnaire

... continued from page 4

is qualified to serve. If you are 70+, you may choose to take an age exemption found in questionnaire. You can mail the questionnaire back or fill it out online.

If You Qualify, Here's What Will Happen

If you qualify for the jury pool, you will receive a summons for jury duty by mail approximately one month before your reporting date. Keep in mind that this is an official court summons and if you do not respond, you could be found in contempt of court. The evening before your assigned date you will need to call a recorded message or check the jury website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/jury/general-information to find out whether your group number (listed on the summons) is called for service. If your group number is not called, you do not have to report and your service is finished however, you may be summoned again in the near future.

Reporting for Jury Duty

If your group number is called and you report for jury duty service, you will be reimbursed \$30 for each day you must report to the courthouse for travel expenses. Your employer can't fire, demote or otherwise penalize you for missing work while performing jury duty. Many employers continue to pay salaries for those on jury duty, but you should check directly with your employer well in advance.

Potential jurors report by 8:15 a.m. to the jury assembly area on the 5th Floor, Room 503 of the Fairfax County Courthouse, 4110 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax. Parking and public transportation are available. A parking validation ticket will be provided at check-in so there is no charge.

All who report will receive an orientation on the juror's role and responsibilities and the trial process. Even though you have been called for jury duty, you may not be selected for a trial.

Find information on the jury process, trials and more on the Circuit Court webpage at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/.



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Son Is Liable for Mom's Nursing Home Expenses

by Evan H. Farr, Certified Elder Law Attorney

Question

My mother was diagnosed with dementia and will need nursing home care in the not-so-distant future. She recently started giving huge monetary gifts to me and my sister for birthdays and holidays. I told her that what she is doing is a bad idea, because Medicaid has a five-year lookback period. She said she just wants to see us enjoy the money while she is still alive.

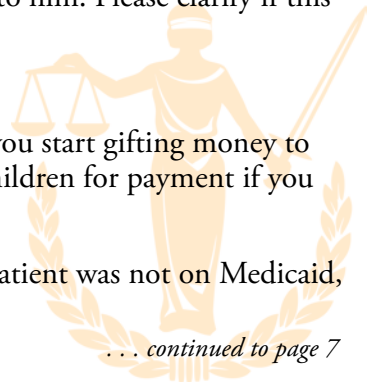
I heard recently that if she does go into a nursing home and can't pay, then the nursing home can come after us (her children) for the money. Is that true? The reason I ask is that I read about a case recently where a nursing home came after a son for over \$200,000 after the mother was unable to pay due to gifting her money to him. Please clarify if this can happen in Virginia. Thanks for your help!

Answer

The case you described does in fact show what can happen if you start gifting money to your children, and how nursing homes can come after your children for payment if you cannot pay.

In *Amsterdam Nursing Home Corp. versus Lynch*, the patient was not on Medicaid, and was expected to pay out of pocket, but failed to do so.

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MEDICAID STRESS REDUCTION TOOL

**FREE Tool Courtesy of
Attorney Evan H. Farr**



Stress Reduction Instructions:

1. Place this Stress Reduction Tool on a FIRM, DRY surface.
2. Ask friends and family for Medicaid advice; get confused. Do research on Internet; get more confused. Talk with a non-certified attorney who dabbles in Elder Law; feel hopeless. Worry about your loved one during the entire process.
3. Follow instructions in the circle to your right while continuing to pay nursing home bills of \$11,000 to \$14,000 per month.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 continuously, or until unconscious.
5. If unconscious, stop head banging activity immediately.



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Mom's Nursing Home Expenses

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In 2013, Denise Lynch entered a nursing home in New York City that was operated by Amsterdam Nursing Home Corporation. One year later, she transferred all of her assets to her son, Sean Lynch, and subsequently stopped paying for room, board, and the skilled nursing care services she was receiving.

The nursing home filed a complaint for the unpaid costs of \$213,909.02. The NY Supreme Court determined that defendant Denise Lynch's Net Available Monthly Income, comprised of her Social Security benefits and her pension income, equaling \$6,428.87, were to be paid directly to the nursing home on a monthly basis. However, checks were instead written out directly to her son, Sean Lynch.

The judgment was against Sean Lynch, in the amount of \$213,909.02 plus interest at the rate of 9% per year until he makes the full payment, plus other costs (court fees etc.) This case describes what can happen if you gift money to an adult child while receiving services that you are responsible for paying.

Should all Gifting Cease if a Person Will Need Long-Term Care?

The case described above does not involve Medicaid eligibility, however gifting can and often does affect Medicaid eligibility! To prevent applicants from simply giving away their money or resources to qualify for Medicaid, the federal government implemented the "look-back period" of 5 years in 49 of the 50 states.

How the Five Year Look-back Rule Works

The look back period begins the date that one applies for Medicaid and is otherwise eligible. For instance, if a senior files an application for Medicaid on July 15, 2019, and is otherwise eligible, the look back period begins on that date and goes back five years to July 15, 2014.

A Medicaid applicant can be penalized if assets (money, homes, cars, etc.) were gifted, transferred, or sold for less than fair market value during the

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five year look-back period. So, those who may need nursing home care within the next five to 10 years must weigh the joy of giving against the potential cost of losing much-needed Medicaid benefits.

Are Children Typically Responsible if a Parent Can't Pay?

Although the case described above was mostly about the fraud involved with a mother gifting money to her son instead of paying the nursing home, many states have filial responsibility laws that make adult children financially responsible for their parents' care when the parents do not have the means to pay for it on their own.

Like most financial choices, giving gifts isn't always the right move. If it's on your mind (or even if it isn't), it's important to consult an experienced Elder Law Attorney to help you decide which option can best help you provide for your loved ones without compromising your own financial security and Medicaid eligibility.

Is the American Community Survey Legitimate?

by Colleen Tressler, FTC

At the FTC, we always tell people to use caution when someone they don't know asks them for personal information. So, it's not surprising that people are asking questions about mailings and phone calls they're getting about the American Community Survey (ACS).

The ACS is a legitimate survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, which is part of the Department of Commerce. Unlike the 10-year Census, this survey runs all year, every year. The survey goes to a random sample of addresses in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Many federal, state, tribal, and local leaders use the answers to update their statistics.

If someone contacts you about the American Community Survey and you want to verify that the visit or phone call is legitimate, simply call your Census regional office.

Here's how the ACS survey process works:

- Census sends a letter saying that your address was selected for the ACS.
- Most people then get instructions to complete the ACS online. If you don't complete the survey, Census will send a paper questionnaire in about two weeks.
- If you still haven't submitted the survey, you may get a call. You also may get a call if you completed the survey, but Census needs to clarify information.



Ways to Respond to American Community Survey



- If Census can't reach you by phone, they may send someone to your address to complete the process in person. Interviewers may visit or call after normal business hours when it's more likely you'll be home. The Census representative must show a photo ID with the U.S. Department of Commerce seal and an expiration date. If you ask, the interviewer will give you a supervisor's contact information and/or the Census regional office phone number for verification. The regional office number for Virginia is **1-800-262-4236**.

For more information, please visit the U.S. Census Bureau's ACS page at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>



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Experiences of a Volunteer Ombudsman

by Mary Jane Dye

After working for the government for more than 40 years, Lincolnia resident, Mary Carroll was ready to retire and began considering a new role where she could make a difference. Her government work as a security manager with the Department of Defense, though meaningful, focused on strategic changes, and tangible results were not always apparent. According to Mary, closing that chapter of her life was a bit sad but also exciting. She wasn't sure what was next, but she was certain it would involve helping others in a more tangible way.

Then one evening, Mary saw a disturbing news story about elder abuse. "I had to help in some way," she said.

Mary heard about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program from her sister-in-law who lives in Pennsylvania. Then, she read about the local program in the *Golden Gazette* and made up her mind to learn more.

For the next five years, Mary volunteered for the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, a program that advocates for the rights of long-term care residents.

According to Mary, it seemed like a perfect fit. "I felt that detecting and helping to correct just one abuse instance would be worth the investment of time and training."

As it turns out, Mary was not alone. She met similarly inspired volunteers during the three days of required training and made new friends. She says that the training went by quickly and that it was run well and thorough. "We learned our roles while also appreciating the limits and seeing the possibilities."

Ombudsman training is comprehensive, according to Camden Doran, specialist for the North-

ern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. "You learn about residents' rights and how to handle abuse, neglect and exploitation." The training also covers ethics and confidentiality. Camden says that guest speakers come to talk about dementia care, disability etiquette and other relevant topics. "New volunteers are even paired with current ones to tour an assisted and nursing facility." Training wraps up on day three with an ombudsman who presents insight into the ombudsman experience. "At the end of training, you are ready to be set up with a facility," says Camden.

Mary's first assignment turned out to be a well-run facility. Mary said, "I met beautiful people, with interesting personalities and fascinating histories." She was fortunate not to encounter any significant problems or abuse. "It was a great learning experience for me, and I wanted more."

With the desire and time for helping, she asked for more facilities to visit. She was given two. "They were small—each with four or five residents, and I quickly got to know care staffs and residents," she explained. According to Mary, they were different than the larger facilities—more personal and more home like. "I truly enjoyed working with residents, helping with their needs and seeing the positive aspects of elder care."

As her ombudsman journey continued, Mary was given a full spectrum operation with rehabilitation and transient patients. "I saw the progression from independence to assisted living and sometimes, permanent, rehabilitation stays." Again, she found problems to solve that were fixable or easily corrected. "Sometimes something as insignificant as having a light turned on at a specific time can mean a great deal to a person unable to do that task."

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"No one knows for certain how much impact they have on the lives of other people. Oftentimes, we have no clue. Yet, we push it just the same." Jay Asher

Dulles Expo Center, October 2 Venture Into Volunteering

Come to Venture Into Volunteering at the Dulles Expo Center on Wednesday, Oct. 2, 10 a.m.– 2 p.m., and learn how to make a difference in your community through volunteering!

Representatives from more than 90 Northern Virginia service organizations and local government agencies will showcase available opportunities for consideration.

The event is free and no registration is necessary. Dulles Expo Center is conveniently located at 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center Dr., Chantilly. For more details, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults and scroll to Hot Topics or call 703-324-5406.



Help to package or donate food at the event.

Volunteer Ombudsman

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Mary is now moving on from her volunteer role as an ombudsman. Her next chapter in life involves helping with a new grandchild, teaching an online class, continuing tai chi and gentle yoga at the Audrey Moore Recreation Center in Annandale, and . . . Mary is taking up pickleball.

She invites all those interested in making a difference in the life of a resident of a long-term care facility to seriously consider volunteering with the Ombudsman Program. "I have seen real dedication and care. I sincerely hope that others will experience this worthwhile opportunity to help our seniors—no matter how big or small."

To learn more about the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/LTCOmbudsman. You also may call Camden Doran at 703-324-5861.

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The Center Scene Featuring Little River Glen

We all know that yoga adds many benefits toward healthy living. However, there is an extra element to yoga at Little River Glen Senior Center—Relax Adaptive Yoga.

This yoga class with its emphasis on breathing exercises and awareness has “a positive impact on those with breathing, sleep or stress difficulties,” says Dee White, class instructor and center director.

Fifteen people in the county received training through a grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. In addition, they now have a two-year fellowship to teach Relax Adaptive Yoga classes, which are open to the community.

Relaxation has been incorporated as an integral part of the exercise. Come try it out at Little River Glen Senior Center, 4001 Barker Ct., Fairfax. This photographer did and it was a great workout!

Photo and story, Catherine Cole



Little River Glen Senior Center offers the popular Relax Adaptive Yoga classes.

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To see all the authors appearing during the festival, visit **www.fallforthebook.org** or pick up a schedule at your local library. Books available for sale and signing at all events. Authors cosponsored by the library include: Andrew Lawler, author of *The Secret Token: Myth, Obsession and the Search for the Lost Colony of Roanoke*; Peter Finn and Michael Dobbs, authors of *War Animals: The Unsung Heroes of World War II*; and Delia Owens, author of *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Visit the library website for more information: **www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library**.



Thursday, Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m.

101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna, 703-938-0405

Meet the author of *The Gatekeepers of Democracy* series, fiction books that celebrate those who volunteer on Election Day to serve as election officers. Learn about “a day at the polls” as seen through the eyes of the election officers who are truly the unsung heroes of the American election system. Books available for sale and signing.

Bob Levey: The Golden Era at *The Washington Post*

Thursday Oct. 24, 7 p.m.

City of Fairfax Regional Library

10360 North Street, Fairfax, 703-293-6227

Meet Bob Levey, author of *Larry Felder, Candidate*. He will share his experiences as the first reporter hired by Ben Bradlee; describe what it was like to sit between Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein during Watergate and be on first-name basis with Katharine Graham; and discuss other tales about the *Washington Post* in the 60s, 70s and 80s. Registrations open at 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 3.

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- A black and white photograph of a young woman and an elderly woman smiling together. The young woman is on the left, with long dark hair, wearing a dark top. The elderly woman is on the right, with short, curly white hair, wearing glasses and a patterned top. They are both smiling warmly at the camera. The photo has a decorative, scalloped edge.



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Library . . . continued from page 12

Book Club Conference

Saturday, Oct. 26, 9 a.m.

Fairfax County Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, 324-8428

Join book club members to learn about starting, running and enhancing book clubs while networking with fellow readers. Light breakfast snacks, coffee and box lunch provided. Cosponsored by the Fairfax Library Foundation. Keynote Speaker: Kathleen Grissom, author of *The Kitchen House*. Registration opens at 10 a.m. Saturday, October 5.

More author visits and other events in October include Indie Author Day, Tiny Terrariums and an Evening of Jazz with Abe Ovadia. Visit the library website for details: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

BIG News for Customers Who Use Sherwood Regional Library. The Sherwood Regional Library will close Thursday, Oct. 3, for a refresh and reopen Tuesday, Oct. 15. Hurry back on the 15th to enjoy your spruced-up branch featuring freshly repainted areas, additional seating, newly carpeted areas and more.

The Really BIG News for November is the Library's New Catalog. The library launches its new catalog on Nov. 13. There may be some service interruptions and elimination of holds in weeks leading up to the switch over. Please visit the library website or stop by your local branch for more details. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library



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SharonShields@fairfaxcounty.gov

  Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations, call 703-246-5101 or TTY 711. Please allow 48 hours in order to make the necessary arrangements.

Mark Your Calendars for Free Medicare 101 Training

Register for the county's free **Medicare 101 Workshops**. Use the contact information listed to register. For more information and dates, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/older-adults and click on Insurance Counseling—VICAP.

Thursday, Oct. 3, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Chesterbrook Residences
2030 Westmoreland St., Falls Church
Rita Evrony, **703-896-7910** or
revrony@jssa.org

Monday, Oct. 7, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
City of Fairfax Regional Library
10360 North St., Fairfax
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Tuesday, Oct. 8, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library
7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Friday, Oct. 11, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
Reston Community Center
2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston
Cassie Lebron, **703-390-6157**

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.
Woodrow Wilson Library
6101 Knollwood Dr., Falls Church
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Burke Centre Library
5935 Freds Oak Rd., Burke
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Thursday, Oct. 17, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Unitarian Church
2709 Hunter Mill Rd., Oakton
703-281-0538

Friday, Oct. 18, 11:00 to 12:30 p.m.
Providence Community Center
3001 Vaden Dr., Fairfax
703-865-0520



Monday, Oct. 21, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Kingstowne Library
6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Monday, Oct. 28, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Thomas Jefferson Library
7415 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Sherwood Regional Library
2501 Sherwood Hall Ln., Alexandria
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
George Mason Regional Library
7001 Little River Tpke., Annandale
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Great Hall, Vienna Presbyterian Church
124 Park St, NE, Vienna
Charles Geschiere, **703-938-9050 x151**

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Great Hall, Vienna Presbyterian Church
124 Park St, NE, Vienna
Charles Geschiere, **703-938-9050 x151**

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Free Medicare 101 Training

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Wednesday, Nov. 6, 6:00 to 8 p.m.

Reston Community Center,
2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston
Cassie Lebron, **703-390-6157**

Thursday, Nov. 7, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Lorton Library
9520 Richmond Hwy., Lorton
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Thursday, Nov. 14, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Chantilly Regional Library,
4000 Stringfellow Rd, Chantilly
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Monday, Nov. 18, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

John Marshall Library
6209 Rose Hill Dr., Alexandria
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 10:30 am to 12 noon

McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean
703-744-9365

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Kings Park Library
9000 Burke Lake Rd., Burke,
Bruce Wallachy, **Wallbdc@gmail.com**

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Reston Community Center,
2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston
Cassie Lebron, **703-390-6157**

Thursday, Nov. 21, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germain Dr., Centreville
VICAP, **703-324-5851**

Free Open Season Workshop for Federal Employees and Retirees

The federal government's open season for federal employees and retirees to change their health plans is Nov. 11–Dec. 9, 2019.



To help navigate the 2020 Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans, plus dental and vision insurance programs, Congressman Gerry Connolly presents an open season workshop that includes a panel discussion and plan exhibitor booths on Saturday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., at the Fairfax County Government Center, 2000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Federal employees, retirees and annuitants, as well as active duty and retired service members are welcome to attend this informative workshop. For more information, call 703-256-3071.

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on 16—Mature Living’s Latest Episode, *Sharing Our Stories*

by Grace Lynch

For award-winning local programming and live county government proceedings, tune in to Channel 16. Find a complete TV schedule, a listing of video-on-demand programs and live streaming at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable-consumer/channel-16.

Channel 16’s latest *Mature Living* episode, *Sharing Our Stories*, explores how county residents are pursuing ways to share their personal stories through memoir writing as well as larger family stories through genealogical research and writing.

The first segment focuses on memoir writing and guests include Donna Chandler, an instructor of memoir writing with the Lifetime Learning Institute at Northern Virginia Community College, and Adrian Hendricks, a memoir writer and host to an informal memoir writing group that meets at his home.

The second segment of the show explores genealogical research and writing with Janel Blue, president of the Mount Vernon Genealogical Society, and Jim Drewry, the group’s publicity chairman.

Guests share tips on getting started and resources that can help you start your own project.

Tune in and learn much more from *Sharing Our Story* guests. You can watch *Mature Living* online, anytime at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable-consumer/channel-16/mature-living or tune to Channel 16: Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.;

Genealogy Your Thing? Tune into Channel 10’s *Tracing Your Family Roots*

Hosts Janel Blue and Chuck Mason explore the many aspects of this fascinating and popular pursuit. Guests include subject matter experts from the Library of Congress, National Archives, local museums & research facilities, and other countries.

The show airs on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Saturday at 7:30 a.m., and Sunday at 1 p.m.

Channel 10 is Fairfax Public Access’ flagship channel that airs “local programming indicative of the diverse life-styles and interests of the Washington Metropolitan area.” Find more Channel 10 shows at www.fcac.org/channel-10-programs.

Monday at 5 p.m.; Tuesday at 4 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.; Wednesday at 9:30 p.m.; Thursday at 4 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.; Friday at 9:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.; Saturday at 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Listen Up, 50+ Podcasts

by Grace Lynch

No one elicits better conversation than Fairfax 50+ Podcast Host Jim Person. Guests include county residents involved in local arts, sports and volunteering. He also interviews subject matter experts on safety, wellness and county services. Find 50+ Podcasts at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults (scroll down to Fairfax 50+ Podcasts). You can also follow 50+ Podcasts through our Facebook posts at www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty50. Here are some recent highlights.

Changing the World, One Child at a Time with GrandInvolve

“It’s joy . . . to do something that is greater than yourself.” This is how GrandInvolve Volunteer Ron Krouse describes mentoring children in the county’s elementary schools. This Hayfield resident, now retired from a 40-year career in the Labor Movement, joins Dorothy Keenan, the founder and executive director of GrandInvolve in this episode of Fairfax 50+ Podcast.

. . . continued to page 19

Finding Caregiver Support in October

Caregivers are reminded that Fairfax County's Aging, Caregiver and Disabilities Resource Line operates from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Professional social workers are on hand to listen to your concerns and help you decide what to do next. Call **703-324-7948**. You should also check out www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults.

Elderlink's Caregiver Support Call—Sometimes you just need to talk to someone who's walking the same walk. This is one of the benefits of the monthly ElderLink Caregiver Support Call. It provides a convenient and safe space for caregivers to connect with and learn from one another.



The calls occur on the second Tuesday each month and are facilitated by two dynamic and experienced ElderLink Social Workers, Daphne Van Tiem and Jennifer Purcell.

The group discusses a pertinent caregiver topic each month. *Preparing for Caregiving through the Holidays* is slated for **Tuesday, October 8, 7–8 p.m.**

Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults—look for the links in the Hot Topics box. You also can call **703-324-5376** or email Daphne.VanTiem@fairfaxcounty.gov. An access phone number and code will be provided to participants.

Caring for You, Caring for Me Begins in Reston—This popular and free five-week program focuses on advocacy for both the caregiver and recipient. The programs are facilitated by Elderlink's Kristin Martin, a certified case manager, and Lauren Elcesser, MSW. The program, they say, provide “caregivers an opportunity to come together in a relaxed setting, to connect with one another, and to

... continued to page 19

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Mentha x Piperita Chocolate Mint

by Judy Funderburk, Certified Master Gardener

Sometimes research teaches you facts you do not really want to know. Looking up the herb “chocolate mint,” I learned that it is considered a Peppermint with chocolate overtones, rather than a true “chocolate mint.” *Mentha x piperita* “chocolate” was created by a natural cross-hybridization between Peppermint and *Mentha aquatica* (Watermint). Indigenous to Europe and the Middle East, chocolate mint has spread across many continents.



The genus name “Mentha” comes from Minthe or Menthe, a water nymph in Greek mythology, who was transformed by Persephone into a mint plant in revenge for Minthe’s ongoing affair with Hades, Persephone’s husband.

Chocolate mint, like most other mints, will grow in part sun with moist soil. It tends to have a creeping habit, especially when its light-purple flowers start to form. For control, plant in a container. For premium flavor, cut back just as flowers begin to form. Use leaves in teas and desserts.

Mint teas are traditionally used to aid in digestion and calm stomach inflammation. Research is currently being conducted to determine the usefulness of mint essential oils in calming irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). A great natural pest repellent, chocolate mint has been shown to repel ants, aphids, cabbage moths, and mice. When left to bloom, chocolate mint’s fragrant flowers will entice droves of beneficial pollinators to your garden.

Reprinted with permission from Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. For information on becoming a master gardener, go to <https://mgnv.org>

CareRing Free Telephone Program

CareRing is a Free Telephone Program for older adults 60+ living in Northern Virginia. It is a daily telephone calling program designed to help individuals who are living alone, aged, disabled or chronically ill to maintain their independence and keep



connected to the community. The calls can be formal and informal friendly chats about general well-being, appointment/medication reminders and daily safety checks to make sure you are okay.

For more information, contact Program Supervisor Allegra Joffe at 703-516-6769 or email AJoffe@prsinc.org.

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50+ Podcast . . . continued from page 16

Grandinvolve is an award winning program that trains volunteers to mentor children attending the county's Title 1 schools where many families have lower incomes.

"We came up with the name, "GrandInvolve," Dorothy explains, not because many volunteers are grandparents but "because we have a very grand idea of a life with purpose where we can make changes in the world that are significant."

According to Dorothy, volunteer experience varies according to the needs of teachers and children. Many volunteers, she says, listen to small children read. Others lead games that reinforce classroom lessons.

Tune in to hear more and discover how Ron taught a group of 5th graders to memorize the names of the Great Lakes. Spoiler Alert: He used a technique you probably remember.

If GrandInvolve sounds like a good fit for you, check them out at www.grandinvolve.org or email info@grandinvolve.org.

Advocating for Residents in Long-Term Care

"It's very rewarding to be the voice for someone who's voice is not heard," says Susan Adams, a volunteer with the NV Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Burke resident Susan is an FBI retiree and current adjunct professor with University of Maryland's Global Campus. She spends four hours each week visiting residents at an area long term care facility. She describes her job as greeting residents, listening and then following up on complaints.

Susan is joined on the podcast by Camden Doran, volunteer coordinator for the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. Doran explains that the program is federally mandated to advocate for the rights of residents receiving long term care.



Jim Person with guests from GrandInvolve.



Jim Person with guests from the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

According to Doran, volunteers work with program staff to advocate for residents in 127 nursing home and assisted living facilities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun.

Tune in to find out more about this important program and find out how Susan worked with facility staff to implement a simple fix that now helps "Mrs. Smith" sleep better at night.

For more information about volunteering for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, visit them at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/LTCOmbudsman or call **703-324-5861**.

October Caregiver Support

. . . continued from page 17

learn tools to help them better advocate for and take care of themselves, while caring for others." It takes place on:

- **Mondays, Oct. 21 – Nov. 25**, 10 a.m. to noon
Reston Community Center
2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston

Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults - look for the links in the Hot Topics box. You can also call **703-324-7210**.

Medicare 101 Featured on Next Lunchtime Webinars for Caregivers —This excellent free series features experts in law, care management, finances and community resources. The next webinar is on Medicare 101 with Bill Vaughan of the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program. It is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 9**, noon to 1 p.m. To register, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults and scroll to the Hot Topics box or call **703-324-5205**.

Volunteer Solutions

Do you have a passion, skill or hobby? Do you enjoy interacting with others? Are you a leader? Find a variety of volunteer opportunities through Fairfax County's Volunteer Solutions. For a complete listing, view bit.ly/VolunteerSolutions or call 703-324-5406. You also may email VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov.

Cross County

- Meals on Wheels drivers, coordinators
- Drivers for grocery shopping, medical appointments, errands and more
- Social visitors
- Caregiver respite
- Pets on Wheels

Senior Centers and Adult Day Health Centers

Instructors in art, crafts, quilting, ceramics, guitar, languages (Spanish, French, Italian, ESL), jewelry-making, dance, fitness, (including S.A.I.L., personal trainers, yoga, Zumba, chair exercise) gardening and more. Assistants needed: front desk greeters, volunteer coordinators, beauticians, sketch models, entertainers (musicians, performers, magicians), lunch helpers, bingo and activity leaders and more. If you have a special talent or skill, your senior center may want your services.



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- Vietnamese Meals on Wheels—Annandale/Falls Church
- Kikuyu-speaking (Kenyan language) social visitor in McLean
- Farsi or Spanish speaking grocery shoppers—Reston/Herndon

Study Buddy

Do you have strong academic skills? Consider becoming a study buddy tutor. Provide one-on-one tutoring to elementary, middle or high school students. For more information or to apply, contact Francesca.Watson2@FairfaxCounty.gov.

Volunteers Need for the 2020 Tax Season

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program needs the following volunteers: greeters, interpreters (including ASL), screeners and tax preparers. No tax training is needed for greeters and interpreters. Free training (classroom and online) is available for screeners and tax preparers. The VITA program offers free income tax preparation and filing services to individuals and families who earned less than \$56,00 in 2019. Opportunities are available throughout Fairfax and Prince Williams counties. Hours are flexible, including evenings and week-ends. For more information and/or to register to volunteer, go to www.nvacash.org.

Submit county volunteer opportunities to Tanya Erway at Tanya.Erway@FairfaxCounty.gov.



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Greet Visitors at Hidden Oaks Nature Center in Annandale

If you love nature and enjoy talking with people, consider volunteering at Hidden Oaks Nature Center's front desk on Friday afternoons from 1 to 5 p.m. Duties include welcoming and orienting visitors to the park, answering the phone and checking in program participants. Contact Fiona Davies at fiona.davies@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-941-1065. Not familiar with Hidden Oaks Nature Center? Learn more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-oaks.

Nonprofit Volunteer Driving Programs

A medical appointment or trip to the pharmacy is a challenge if you no longer drive. Consider becoming a volunteer driver or office assistant/ride-scheduler through one of these organizations:

Herndon Village Network

703-375-9439; www.herndonvillagenetwork.org

Mount Vernon at Home

703-303-4060; www.mountvernonathome.org

Reston Community Center

703-390-6198; www.restoncommunitycenter.com/about-reston/rcc-rides

Shepherd's Center

- **Annandale/Springfield**
703-941-1419; www.shepherdscenter-annandale.org
- **Fairfax/Burke**
703-323-4788; www.scfbva.org
- **Great Falls**
703-586-9696; www.theSCGF.org
- **McLean/Arlington/Falls Church**
703-506-2199; www.scmafc.org
- **Oakton/Vienna**, 703-281-0538;
<http://scov.org>
- **South County**
703-799-0505; email scsc-transport@verizon.net
- **Western Fairfax County**
703-246-5920; www.scwfc.org

Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Expands to Reston/Herndon

The Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna is increasing its coverage in Reston and expanding to Herndon by recruiting volunteers and seeking clients with zip codes: 20190, 20191, 20192, 20193, 20194, 20195, 22095 and 22096, 20170, 20171 and 20172.

The Shepherd's Center will provide free medical and companion transportation services and combat loneliness with its Friendly Callers & Visitors programs. They also offer social engagement events and other services. Learn more at 703-281-0538 or email remasmith@scov.org and visit www.scov.org.

Don't Miss the Art of Volunteering by RSVP—Northern Virginia

RSVP—Northern Virginia, the largest volunteer group in Fairfax for 55+, will hold its next *Fairfax Area Art of Volunteering in Retirement* seminar at 1:30 p.m., Thurs., Oct. 17, Fairfax Regional Library,



Fairfax, 10360 North St., Fairfax. To register for this free event, please visit www.rsvpnova.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. Be sure to visit the RSVP table at the Ventures in Volunteering Fair, Oct. 2, at The Dulles Expo Center.

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Northern Virginia Senior Olympics Is Picture Perfect



Photo credits, Rob Payne

What Motivates You to be Active?



According to the National Institute on Aging at NIH being physically

active and participating in activities you enjoy may help support healthy aging. Older people with active lifestyles:

- Are less likely to develop certain diseases.
- Have a longer lifespan.
- Are happier and less depressed.
- Are better prepared to cope with loss.

Find ways to be physically active that are meaningful to you—especially if they involve other

people. Try taking group exercise classes, dancing, joining a sports club, or playing with your grandchildren.

Stay motivated throughout the year by reading the *Golden Gazette* to learn what your peers are doing to keep active and have fun.

There is still time to sign up

Northern Virginia Senior Softball

Join NVSS this fall. Open to men and women. The average age is 67. “If you played as a kid, you can do it now,” says Dave, league contact. See www.nvss.org or call Dave at 703-663-7881.

October Community Calendar

Oct. 5, 1 p.m. *Exploring Teas: Advanced Workshop.* Already attended basic tea seminars? Then delve into an exploration of unique teas - by process, terroir and/or scarcity. Tea-infused treats and a take-home tea sampler are included. \$35. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Rd., Great Falls. Call **703-222-4664**.

Oct. 7, 7-8:30 p.m. *Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia.* Learn the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, stages and risk factors of Alzheimer's, research and treatments to address some symptoms and more. Free. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Rd., Burke. Call **703-978-5600**.

Oct. 8, 7-8 p.m. *Free Telephone Support Group for Family Caregivers of Older Adults.* Join our discussion on "Caregiving Over the Holidays."

Share your experiences, gain support and get important information without having to travel. To register, call **703-324-5376**.

Oct. 9, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. *Side by Side Parkinson's Support Groups.* Two support groups, each in their own space, next to each other. One for people with Parkinson's to participate in group activities and engage with each other. The other for caregivers to share and learn together. Free. Virginia Hospital Center-Carlin Springs, 601 S Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington. To register, call Sonia at **571-286-5000**.

Oct. 9, 6-8:30 p.m. *Learn to Paint Like the Masters.* Learn about and recreate a famous masterpiece with local artist Sandra Hill. Free. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. To register, call **703-356-0770**.

... continued to page 24

Be a Smart Driver with Popular Refresher Course

AARP Smart Driver refresher course will be offered at various locations in October. Participants must attend the entire session(s) to receive a certificate of completion. Course participants will learn:

- Valuable defensive driving skills
- Proven safety strategies
- How to keep up with new driving technologies
- The current rules of the road, specific to your community
- How to manage and accommodate common age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time

Participants should check with their insurance agent to see if they are eligible for a multi-year discount after completing the course. There are no tests required to pass the course.

The course costs \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for nonmembers (check or cash only). Checks are made payable to AARP. Members of AARP should bring their membership cards.

For more information, visit **www.aarp.org/drive** or call 1-888-227-7669.

Session Schedule

Monday, Oct. 7, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Lorton Senior Center

7722 Gunston Plaza, Lorton, 703-550-7195

Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 15-16, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Providence Community Center

3001 Vaden Dr., Fairfax, 703-865-0529

Friday and Monday, Oct. 18 and 21, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Oakton United Methodist Church

2951 Chain Bridge Rd., Oakton, 703-591-1847

Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 21-22, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Falls Church Community Center

223 Little Falls St., Falls Church, 703-248-5027

Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 28-29, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Annandale United Methodist Church

6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale, 703-573-2056

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October Community Calendar

... continued from page 23

Oct. 13, 7 p.m. *Bluegrass – Mainline Express.* These talented musicians create pure, unadulterated American roots music – totally original but steeped in tradition. Held indoors at Frying Pan Park's Visitor Center. Tickets \$18 in advance/\$20 at the door. 2739 West Ox Rd., Herndon. Call **703-222-4664**.

Oct. 15, 1-3 p.m. *How to Get a Good Digital Photo from Old Photos; Introduction to RootsMagic.* Learn about the digital photography aspects of genealogy and about the RootsMagic software. Free. Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Rd., Alexandria. Visit **www.mvgenealogy.org**.

Oct. 15, 6:30-7:30 p.m. *Make and Take.* Make a beautiful clay marble ring stand. They're the perfect place to keep your wedding ring while washing dishes and double as ultra-pretty room décor. Make it for yourself or as a holiday gift! Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Space is limited. Call **703-356-0770**.

Oct. 18, 10:30 a.m.-Noon. *NV Rides 5th Anniversary Celebration.* Celebrate the birthday of NV Rides, a network of volunteer driving programs throughout Northern VA. Enjoy food, prizes and raffles, mingle with local politicians

and learn about volunteer opportunities. Free. Pozez JCC of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Tnpk., Fairfax. Call **703-537-3070**.

Oct. 19, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. *Hollin Hall Senior Center Annual Bazaar/Craft Fair.* Enjoy over 30 crafters, a silent auction, bake sale and door prizes. Admission is free and open to the public. 1500 Shenandoah Rd., Alexandria. Call **703-765-4573**.

Oct. 21-Nov. 25 (Mondays), 10 a.m.-Noon. **Free** *"Caring for You, Caring for Me" Program.* This 5-week program is a blend of interactive support and education for caregivers of older adults. It focuses on advocacy and care for both the caregiver and care recipient. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. To register, call **703-324-7210**.

Oct. 26, 11 a.m.-Noon. *Halloween Trunk-or-Treat.* Bring the kids and grandkids out for trick-or-treat at cars officially set up by the library. Make creepy crafts, play games and enjoy light refreshments. Costumes encouraged. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Hwy., Lorton. Call **703-339-7385**.